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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Poland

SUBJECT Coal Production: Conditions in the Maria Brown-Coal
Pit/Paweł Mine at ChebziePLACE ACQUIRED
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Maria Mine, Nieciecz

1. "The small Maria brown-coal mine (formerly the Emma pit) near Nieciecz (Nettschuetz) has been incorporated into the brown-coal enterprise in lower Silesia which is under the management of Zary (Sorau). My knowledge of this [REDACTED]
2. "Maria is a rather small coal mine, situated outside the main brown-coal district. It employs about 300 men. The mining is performed in two shifts. The excavation is only some dozen meters deep.
3. "According to official data released by the pit management in 1952 the Maria coal production was 90% of the plan. This relatively high result was only possible at the beginning of 1952 when the miners worked large 'over-norms'. After new norms were introduced in early summer 1952 the production fell off rapidly. In November-December 1952 it was only about 50% of the quota plan. The decrease in production continued and in February 1953 was only 40% of the quota plan.
4. "When these low productivity reports reached the management in Zary a special commission arrived at the Maria pit. The local director and his deputy and also the secretary of the local CP cell were fired, and a new regime was launched in the mine. As a result the productivity in March 1953 amounted to 99.7%.
5. "Low production at this mine has been caused by the very outmoded equipment, especially the transport equipment. The tools were worn out. Often not enough pit lumber is supplied. The low production is also caused by the unwillingness of the coal miners. Already by the end of 1952 resistance to the high norms was spreading all over the coal basin. With the introduction of the new prices

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and new wages at the beginning of January 1953 this resistance was kindled.

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6. "Before the January 1953 [redacted] (when the mine was staying under the set work quota) was around 400 zlotys per month. Under the new wage scale [redacted] around 600 zlotys - about a 50% increase. However, prices rose simultaneously about 100%. Before 3 January 53, I paid about 220 zlotys monthly for my three meals a day. The costs for the same period after introduction of the new prices increased to 450 zlotys. I had more cash in my pocket, but as all prices had been raised 50% to 100% the buying power of my money had largely deteriorated.
7. "To overcome the resistance of the miners special delegates were sent to the pit from Warsaw government and CP offices. The productivity increased but only under the direct pressure exerted by the Central Warsaw Board. Before I left Poland, I used to hear from all sides that after the departure of the Warsaw delegates the mines would return to their go-slow strike.

Pawel Mine, Chebzie

8. "The decrease in the productivity at other coal mines was not so obvious, for instance not in the Pawel mines in Chebzie [sig] near Ruda Slaska [sig]. There 1,500 miners, 500 are inmates of the compulsory labor camp attached to the mine. The age of the men in this camp ranges from 16 to 50 years. Most have been sentenced to one or two years of prison or have been sent to the labor camp to finish their sentences. Most have come from trade or industry and have been sentenced for all kinds of 'economical sabotage'. There are also some former officers and NCO's from the Quartermaster Service sentenced for various irregularities. All inmates receive on paper the same wages as the free workers (without premiums or additional payments). In practice, 50% of these wages are withheld to cover their 'maintenance' in the camp; 25% goes to the obligatory savings-account; and 25% is paid to the inmates in the form of coupons which entitles them to buy some food items and cigarettes in the camp canteen.
9. "I understand that it is not the general rule for only 50% of the pay to be withheld by the State. In some camps the maintenance fee runs as high as 85% of the workers' wages. Such conditions prevail in the stone-quarry in Strzegom (Striegau). The inmates of compulsory labor camps attached to coal mines are more 'privileged' than those attached to other branches of trade and industry. They also receive relatively sufficient food. Nobody has reason to grumble that the bread is not sufficient. From time to time some inmates at the Pawel mine even barter their bread for cigarettes from the free workers. Meat is served either twice or three times a week. The hardest thing about these camps is the heavy, strict work. But all the inmates work because even for minor irregularities they could be sent back to prison, or to worse working places, and might have their sentence extended."

[Collector's note: The contact added the following item translated from the June 25th issue of 'Glos Pracy', the official paper of the Central Council of Polish Trade Unions:

"In the mines of the Rudzki United Coal Industries, which are fighting to speed up fulfillment of production plans, a number of miners have distinguished themselves by meeting the plan for the first six months two weeks before the deadline."

He comments that a number of the mines named are worked by slave labor, including the mine at Sosnica [sig].

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